(b) whether the situtation has worsened as compared to that of the Ninth Five Year Plan period or improved, during the Tenth Five Year Plan period so far;

(c) whether any review of the status of the implementation of the recommendations made by the special group on "Targeting 10 million Employment Opportunities per year" headed by Dr. S.P. Gupta constituted by Planning Commission, for creation of five crores jobs during Tenth Five Year Plan has been carried out; and

(d) if so, the findings thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI M.V. RAJASEKHARAN): (a) and (b) As per the last two quinquennial surveys conducted by the NSSO the number of employment opportunities on usual status basis for persons educated (secondary & above) increased from 55.47 million in 1993-94 to 73.84 million in 1999-2000 and unemployment rate among educated youth decreased from 18.5% in 1993-94 to 14.8% in 1999-2000.

(c) and (d) The Report of "Special Group on Targeting 10 Million Employment Opportunities per year" was utilised by the Planning Commission in preparing the Tenth Five Year Plan.

Aims of Rashtriya Sam Vikas Yojana

474. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the aims and objectives of the Backward Districts Initiative of the Rashtriya Sam Vikas Yojana;

(b) the details of districts identified in the State of Andhra Pradesh under the above Yojana; and

(c) the details of guidelines issued for the Backward Districts Initiative of the Rashtriya Sam Vikas Yojana?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI M.V. RAJASEKHARAN): (a) The main objectives of the Backward Districts

Initiative of the Rashtriya Sam Vikas Yojana are to address the problems of low agricultural productivity, unemployment and to fill critical gaps in physical and social infrastructure.

(b) The names of the districts of Andhra Pradesh covered under the scheme are: Adilabad, Warangal, Chittoor, Mahbubnagar, Vizianagaram, Karimnagar, Khammam, Medak, Nalgonda and Nizamabad.

(c) The details of the salient features of the guidelines issued for the Backward Districts Initiative are as under:

1. The district authorities are required to prepare a three year master plan with nested Annual Action Plan based on a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis, review of on-going schemes and identification of a few lead sectors wherein State intervention would help the district overcome major bottlenecks in development.

2. A sum of Rs. 15 crore per year is to be provided to each of the districts for a period of three years *i.e.* a total of Rs. 45 crore per district on 100% grant basis in suitable instalments linked with satisfactory progress of the District Plan.

3. The State Government is to release funds under the programme to a separate head created for the purpose under the District Rural Development Agency within 15 days of the receipt of the said funds.

4. While preparing the District Plan, peoples' participation and involvement of PRIs, NGOs and Self Help Groups has to be ensured at every stage including plan formulation, implementation and monitoring.

5. The guidelines emphasize that efforts should be made to concentrate on the poorer pockets and the disadvantaged communities within the district.

6. Steps for the preparation of the District Plans including the chapterization scheme has been prescribed in the guidlines.

7. There are three committees for the scheme, namely, a High Level Committee chaired by Deputy Chairman, Planning

Commission to approve policies regarding initiatives of the scheme, an Empowered Committee chaired by Secretary, Planning Commission to approve the District Plans, monitor and review the programmes and for having evaluations and mid-term appraisals conducted and State Level Steering Committee chaired by Chief Secretary of the State to get the detailed District Plans prepared and recommend them to Planning Commission for concurrence of schemes.

Bringing down of BPL population percentage

†475. SHRI MANGANI LAL MANDAL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the number of people living Below Poverty Line in rural areas in 1997 constituted 43 per cent, which Government has decided to bring down upto 15 per cent by 2012;

(b) whether it is a fact that based on the survey conducted by N.S.S.O. in 1999 regarding population living Below Poverty Line in the country, Planning Commission has directed all States to have a survey conducted to indicate whether the number is less than actuals; and

(c) if so, as a result thereof, the details and status of the State-wise and national level percentage of population Below Poverty Line?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI M.V. RAJASEKHARAN): (a) The Planning Commission estimates the incidence of poverty at national and State level from the large sample survey on household consumer expenditure conducted by the National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) at an interval of approximately five years. According to the latest available data from such survey (NSS 55th Round) conducted in 1999-2000, the number and percentage of persons living below the poverty line is 2602.50 lakhs and 26.10% respectively. Planning Commission for the first time has set a monitorable target for reduction of poverty by 5 percentage points by 2007 and by 15 percentage points by 2012 in consistence with the overall growth target of 8% per annum. Planning Commission has projected the percentage of population

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.